

Tippecanoe County Board of Commissioners

And

Tippecanoe County Council

Joint Public Hearing

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 9, 2020

6:00 PM

Tippecanoe Room, Tippecanoe County Office Building
20 N 3rd Street, Lafayette, Indiana

Commissioners Virtually present: President Tracy A. Brown, Vice President Thomas P. Murtaugh, and Commissioner David Byers.

Councilmembers Virtually present: President Kevin Underwood, Kathy Vernon, Ben Murray, Lisa Dullum, Jody Hamilton, Roland Winger. Absent: Vice President John Basham.

Also Virtually present: Attorney Doug Masson, Auditor Robert Plantenga, Commissioners' Assistant Paula Bennett, and Recording Secretary Jennifer Wafford.

I. SPECIAL JOINT COUNCIL COMMISSIONERS VIRTUAL MEETING

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Council President Kevin Underwood called the Council meeting to order, and Commissioner President Tracy Brown called the Commissioner's meeting to order.
2. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND HISTORY OF PROJECT**

Rob Barnes with the Hagerman Group introduced himself and the team that has been working on this project. In attendance at the meeting was Eric Ratz (DLZ), who is a principal architect, and Greg Martz (GM Development). Rob asked Commissioner Brown if he would start the meeting by presenting the background information and the History of the project.

Commissioner Brown stated that the jail was originally constructed in 1990 and renovated in 2003. The current jail capacity is 603 inmates. In 2019, the results of a jail feasibility study and Life Cycle cost analysis study were received from DLZ. This study looked at evaluating our aging facilities for major maintenance issues and helped the County prioritize the projects needed, evaluated overcrowding issues over the years and helped predict population trends, and evaluated the administrative space in Building A at the Sheriff's Office. In terms of future needs, the study showed that by 2040 the jail would need to be built to house 900 beds, which at the current capacity would leave a 300-bed shortfall and would cost between \$28-\$32 million dollars. This amount would only be addressing the housing issue. This study also showed that the Sheriff's office was lacking in administrative space, as the administrative space has remained the same since original construction. This area no longer meets the current needs of the Sheriff's department, which has grown by 100% since then. Conventional solutions that have been used by other counties, when faced with growth, were not a cost-effective solution for Tippecanoe County, considering additional changes were also needed at Community Corrections. Due to the success and growth of the Community Corrections program, there is now a need for additional training, programming, and administrative spaces. The

goal in expanding the Community Corrections facility is to avoid just filling up bigger jail space but to increase participation in alternative methods of fulfilling jail terms. In using this alternative method, the hope is to reduce recidivism.

Greg Martz, with GM Development, discussed what entails a BOT public-private partnership. He advised that a BOT stands for Build Operate Transfer. This partnership is covered under Indiana Code 5-23. Under this code, the County can procure the construction, designing, and financing of a project. In January 2020, the Commissioners adopted a Resolution in order to use this statute. The request for proposals was issued in May of 2020. The request for proposal was written based on the Jail study that had been completed and the need identified in that study. The law mentioned allows the County to enter into a scoping period with the selected team, which is what has taken place since May 2020. Since May, there has been a design, construction, and finance team working with the Tippecanoe County Sheriff and Community Corrections to figure out the scope for the project. The public hearing tonight is the conclusion of the scoping period. The design has been completed to a level that will allow a guaranteed price and financing to move forward. The next steps are to receive the bank proposals, which have already been requested. The request has been made to the banks that when they submit their interest rates, these be locked in for 60 days. This will allow the County Commissioners and County Council to accept the terms in their January meeting's and then close approximately 30 days after. The request has been made to have the rates delivered by December 16th, 2020. The rates will then be locked in until February 16th, 2021, which is when the approximate closing date would occur. The next steps are to receive those rates, share them with the Auditor, the Council, and commissioners, and then they will be presented formally at the January 4th Commissioners Meeting and January 12th Council Meeting.

3. Presentation of Modernized Solutions

Sheriff Bob Goldsmith, advised that two areas are being reviewed for changes the jail and the Sheriff's office. Since entering office, he has seen a need for additional programming space, housing, and classroom space. He realizes that there is a great need to provide mental health and substance abuse services. He has been advised by an inmate that the new program being offered Q360 has been beneficial, and he wants to stay there and complete the program instead of being transferred out. This request can't be fulfilled when there is limited programming space and a waiting list of people who want to participate in the program. The Sheriff does not want to just build a place to house individuals but is working with Community Corrections to create a different approach to the issues of programming and space. While the jail itself has had add-on additions, the administrative space has not had additions. This results in items being walked through the administrative area that could be deadly. These items are being stored in a room that doesn't have the best ventilation, which is an issue that needs to be addressed. Property is being housed in 5 different locations, which needs to be changed. As our community continues to grow, so does the crime rate. In order to meet these needs, there needs to be a separate administrative area. This would free up the current administrative space at the jail, to be used for programming and training. The new plans would include an office for a Captain of Detectives, a bigger office with privacy for the Sergeant of detectives, and more secure space for the detectives to work with inmates. He feels that although this is an expensive project, there is a great need for it.

Jason Huber, Community Corrections Executive Director, states that this has been a very intentional project that has been undertaken for the last seven to eight months. The focus has been on programming dealing with mental health and substance abuse primarily but also increasing the life skills services provided. Community Corrections has

grown significantly over the last three to four years. With the growth comes an expectation internally and from the community to address some of the needs and conditions that people find themselves needing extra services for that are in the care of Community Corrections. This project is an investment on behalf of the county, but one that Jason feels will pay dividends to the staff, the participants served, and to the community as a whole. The plan is to be transformative in the approach to mental health and substance abuse services by offering those services in-house. Tippecanoe County Community Corrections will be one of the first in the State to employ Substance abuse Counselors on-site, and peer recovery coaches in the newly developed behavioral wellness center. The project is also developing a life skills and training center to create a mini academy for the participants. With the additions, space has been allocated for administrative areas and also improving the flow of participants into and out of the work release facility. The new section would be just north of the current building that would house the new main lobby area, as well as the work release center and space for the release operations. The upper level would provide for meaningful case management and a large community training auditorium. The auditorium would be used by Community Corrections, the Sheriff's Department, and additional community organizations or departments within the county. The Community Corrections Department understands that this is an investment and want to be good stewards of the taxpayer's money. They feel that this proposal helps them accomplish that goal. Letters of support for this project have been received on behalf of all the Judges of Tippecanoe County, the Community Corrections Advisory Board, and the Tippecanoe County Health Department.

4. Financing Overview

Greg Martz, GM Development, concluded the presentation by discussing the financing options and analysis for the proposed project. As previously mentioned, the rates from the bank are expected to be received in one week. When the interest rates are received and the decision is made as to which bank will be used for this project, the rates will be locked in. All the banks responding to the RFP should have the exact same terms, which should make the selection process as easy as selecting the lowest interest rate. The rates are currently at an all-time low, and because of this, the proposals are expected to be aggressive. Selection of the bank and rate needs to happen before the next public meeting to allow proper notification to be sent out. The rate will then be locked in for 60 days, which will allow the public process to continue without the risk of the rate going up. The public process includes the Commissioners meeting on January 4th, 2021 for a Public Hearing, if the project is approved at the Regular Commissioners meeting on January 4th. If approved, it will proceed to the County Council meeting on January 12th, 2021. If the Council approves the financing terms at their meeting, then there will be a notice of determination published. This notice is a final notice that allows the public that may not have seen the presentation tonight, or either of the presentations on the 4th or 12th of January, to be notified about the project and the financing. The notice will be published twice, and upon the conclusion of the 2nd publication, the closing can occur. The monthly payment on this project is expected to be close to the same payment that the county has been paying on the Jail lease for the last several years. The rate will be locked in for the entirety of the term, so there will be no chance that the payment will go up in the future.

Rob Barnes thanked everyone who has been working on this project for the last seven months and for the collaboration that took place between all parties. He notes that a lot of hard work and tough decisions had to be made during those months regarding this project.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Rob Barnes thanked Paula Bennett and Maxwell Walling for their help in making the presentation and virtual meeting possible.

Margaret Hass asked, "What specific programs are going to be offered to those who are not incarcerated?" Jason Huber stated that the programs offered would be mental health and substance abuse counseling services, individual group counseling, large group counseling, small group counseling, family counseling, peer recovery services and life skills training. Sheriff Goldsmith also responded that there would be mental health and substance abuse programs and recovery group meetings offered at the jail. Margaret Hass would also like to know what type of input the planners of this project have gotten from current or former inmates, or participants in Community corrections to shape the plan? Eric Ratz, DLZ, stated that they have spent the majority of the time with the Sheriff and Community Corrections administration, and are willing to sit down with individuals from Community corrections, either current or past participants and address what they see as concerns for this project.

Susan Schechter, 1001 Ferry Street, stated that the current jail has been in place for 30 years, and that the assumption is this new building being planned should also last for 30 years. She wants to know what design features have been thought of for the building that will still be in use in 2050? Sheriff Goldsmith responded that the blueprints show office space additions for areas that the current facility doesn't have, and the additional programming space will be beneficial for the future. Susan Schechter clarified her question about building design. The question is, "Will it have a solar rooftop?". Sheriff Goldsmith responded that there have been discussions about solar and its something that they will look at. Commissioner Brown stated that the discussions regarding sustainable energy are not just something they are thinking about, but they have been formalized discussions with vendors regarding how to best heat water and provide electricity.

Councilmember Lisa Dullum asked what the dollar amount is for the project. Greg Martz advised that the complete borrowing amount will be \$16,750,000. This amount is all inclusive for both projects and all issuance costs.

Clinton Alexander, 2319 Temple Court, has two questions. The first question is "Besides using the Community Corrections program to reduce recidivism, what steps is the County taking to reduce recidivism and initial incarceration for community members?" Jason Huber responded that one of the things we are doing as a community is participating in the resiliency and recovery network that has quarterly group meetings and some groups meeting monthly, to discuss ways to address major issues in the community. Some of those issues being substance abuse and mental health. There is also a partnership with Purdue University that helps guide some programs and offer some grants to help reduce recidivism. Clinton's second question is, "Where does Tippecanoe county stand on adopting the new process of transporting individuals with mental health issues, to Indiana's State Psychiatric Hospital?" Sheriff Goldsmith responded that the county is on board with the new process, but bed space availability plays a role in the process. He stated that, Indiana Sheriff's Association President Reynolds, is trying to make it a faster process with less bumps in the road. He also states that, in response to the first question, the Jail is working with the inmates to provide skills training to help them when they are released and to help reduce recidivism.

Kirsten Gibson, 1407 Virginia Street, states that in Tippecanoe County for someone who has commercial insurance there is a current 3-month wait to get psychiatric services. She also states that for a normal person, outside of the jail system, there aren't many options for these services. It is not a surprise to her that inmates are asking for these kinds of services, because they aren't available outside of the jail system. She urges the elected officials and Sheriff's office

to consider the efforts already being done in the community and how they can be supported through our taxes.

Johanna Merritt asked, "What happens when an inmate has paid all fees but is waiting only for transportation? A young mother has paid in full since October and has not yet been offered transport home. What can we do to expedite her being sent home to be with her infant?" Jason Huber responded that there is a process that individuals go through for sentencing or assignment to Community Corrections. There is a wait time that's associated with the intake process and many factors that go into why it may take someone a little longer to be transferred. COVID-19 has placed large restrictions on how quickly people can be moved over. In response to the question about the young mother, there is a streamlining available in the new plan for released people to get their ankle device with transportation. He encouraged the individual to email him directly for further conversation.

Commissioner Murtaugh states that his office did receive some feedback from a variety of individuals from around the county, one of them being Senator Alting. Senator Alting stated that he was very proud of this community and this effort and he whole heartedly supports this project and the idea of adding additional programming versus adding bed space. Michael Budd from United Way is also very supportive of this project.

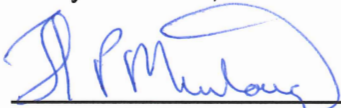
Email Comments submitted by Margaret Hass, Susan Schechter, Polly Barks, Ian Andrews, Nicole McCabe, Patrick DeBonis, Amanda Estes, Michelle Lyzenga, Alex Mason, Julia Kilgour, Christopher Hegarty, Mary Lehmkuhl, Adelia Sorge, Ethan Johnson, Emily Hardy, Meghan Smith, Anthony Hegarty, and Step Silva

Commissioner Murtaugh moved to adjourn. President Brown adjourned the meeting.

Councilmember Winger moved to adjourn, second by Councilmember Hamilton. President Underwood adjourned the meeting.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF
THE COUNTY OF TIPPECANOE


Tracy A. Brown, President


Thomas P. Murtaugh, Vice-President


David S. Byers, Member

ATTEST:


Robert A. Plantenga, Auditor 12/28/2020

Minutes prepared by Jennifer Wafford, Recording Secretary